

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-9, 21 and 22 are pending in the application, with claims 21 and 22 being the independent claims. Claims 1 and 10-20 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. New claims 21 and 22 have been added.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned “**Version With Markings to Show Changes Made.**”

Based on the above Amendment and the following Remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

The indication that claim 10 contains allowable subject matter is gratefully noted. Claim 10 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 22.

The Action objects to the drawings for not including reference number 50' in Fig. 3. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Reference number 50' is on the far right hand side of Fig. 3 and represents the upper fully reflecting mirror.

Concerning the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, the claims have been amended to recite changing the permeabilities of wrappers “in the tobacco processing industry”.

Concerning the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, of claim 1, new claims 21 and 22 have been drafted to comply with Section 112. Reconsideration of the rejection

of claim 2 is respectfully submitted in that claim 2 does not recite “said perforating step”.

Concerning the rejection of claim 5, claim 21 has been amended to specify that “rod-shaped products” and the “plurality of products” are the same products.

Claims 1, 2 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,720,619 to Mattei et al. (“Mattei”). Claims 1, 2 and 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,064,032 to Voss et al. (“Voss”). Claims 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mattei.

Claim 1 has been canceled in favor of new claim 21. Claim 21 further defines the oscillating step by reciting “swiveling the mirror from a first position to a second position to move the at least two laser beam synchronously in the conveying direction of the first set of at least two rolling articles, and swiveling the mirror opposite to the conveying direction back to the first position to reflect the at least two laser beams upon another set of at least two consecutive products following the first set of at least two consecutive products.” Support for new claim 21 can be found, for example, in Fig. 3 and the associated description.

Mattei does not teach at least this feature. The reflecting surfaces 26 of Mattei rotate constantly in the same direction and do not oscillate in the conveying direction from a first position into a second position and then opposite to the conveying direction back into the first position. Claim 21 clearly distinguishes over Voss. Voss does not use mirrors at all, particularly oscillating mirrors. Further, Voss does not treat tubular wrappers of rod-shaped products. Voss only treats flat wrapper strips.

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Conclusion

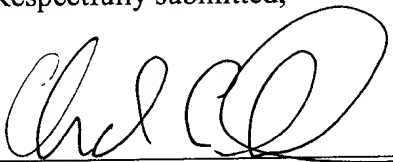
All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

A Notice of Allowance with claims 2-9, 21 and 22 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Version With Markings To Show Changes Made

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1 and 10-20; amend claims 2-9; and add new claim 21 and 22.

2. (Amended) The method of claim [1] 21, wherein said changing step includes perforating the wrappers of \underline{n} $[\underline{n}] \geq 2$ products, \underline{n} $[\underline{n}]$ being a natural number.

3. (Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein said perforating step includes establishing a source of \underline{n} at least substantially parallel laser beams, and directing the \underline{n} $[\underline{n}]$ beams upon \underline{n} $[\underline{n}] - \underline{x}$ $[\underline{x}]$ oscillatable beam reflecting mirrors to focus the \underline{n} $[\underline{n}]$ beams upon the wrapper of at least one product, \underline{x} $[\underline{x}]$ being a natural number less than \underline{n} $[\underline{n}]$.

4. (Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein \underline{n} $[\underline{n}]$ equals two.

5. (Amended) The method of claim 3, further comprising [the step of] moving the products in the course of said changing step and oscillating each mirror to thus focus the beams upon the wrappers of moving products.

6. (Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein $[\underline{n}]$ \underline{n} equals two.

7. (Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein said changing step includes simultaneously perforating m [m] selected portions of the wrapper of each product.
8. (Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein m [m] ≥ 2 and is a natural number.
9. (Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein said perforating step includes directing m [m] substantially parallel pulsating laser beams upon the wrapper of each product.